



Department of State **TELEGRAM**

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 10-14 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 SMS-01 ACDA-12
AID-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 A-02 OPR-02 SY-05 SYE-00
OC-06 CCO-00 ANAE-00 HA-05 1089 W
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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7761
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY QACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2119
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USICA WASHDC IMMEDIATE.
CINCEUR VAIHENGEN GE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by [Signature] DATE 8/14/87
() RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
() ENCLOSE () DECLASSIFY in PART
() DEFER () Non-responsive info.
FOR NO or PA exemptions

TS authority to:
() CLASSIFY as _____, OADR
() DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C, OADR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 1932

NEW DELHI ALSO FOR MILLS AND PECK; CINCEUR AND CINCPAC ALSO
FOR POLADS

E.O. 12065: GDS 6/19/86 (GRIFFIN, GEORGE G. 9.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR PINS PINT SHUM AF
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 1884 ✓

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1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

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2. SUMMARY: THE KABUL RUMOR MILL CONTINUES TO WORK OVERTIME COUGHING UP NUMEROUS AND OFTEN CONFLICTING VERSIONS OF KHALQ-PARCHAM INFIGHTING, INCLUDING GUNFIGHTS, ASSASSINATIONS, SUICIDES, DEFECTIONS AND PREDICTIONS OF CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP. MOST OF THEM ARE PATENTLY FALSE, BUT THEY DO REFLECT ONGOING TENSIONS IN THE RULING CIRCLES AND ARE FUELED BY EVEN MORE EXAGGERATED STORIES CARRIED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA BASED IN PAKISTAN AND INDIA. LOCAL OBSERVERS ARE ASKING EACH OTHER WHAT ROLE THE SOVIETS ARE PLAYING IN ALL THIS, IF ANY, THOUGH THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT THEY WISH IT WOULD CEASE. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE INDICATE THAT THE JOINT AFGHAN/ SOVIET OFFENSIVES IN THE PAGHMAN MOUNTAINS AND ALONG THE SALANG PASS ROAD NORTH OF KABUL HAVE ENDED WITH HUNDREDS OF AFGHAN VILLAGERS KILLED AND CONSIDERABLE PROPERTY DAMAGE. RESISTANCE FIGHTERS CONTINUED TO CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR THE MILITARY, HOWEVER, IN MANY OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING THE CITIES OF HERAT AND QANDAHAR. END SUMMARY.

3. PERHAPS THE MOST STARTLING STORY THAT HAS BEEN MAKING THE ROUNDS IN KABUL FOR THE PAST WEEK IS THE ONE THAT SABRAK KARNAL TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE ON JUNE 13. HOWEVER, IN HIS SEVERAL PUBLIC APPEARANCES SINCE THAT TIME, KARNAL HAS SEEMED FIT AND COCKY AS ALWAYS. LT. GEN. ABDUL QADER LEFT FOR THE USSR ON JUNE 18, OSTENSIBLY FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, PROMPTING A SPATE OF RUMORS THAT HE HAD BEEN SHOT IN AN ARGUMENT. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SARWARI APPEARED HALE AT A MEDICAL WORKERS "CONGRESS" ON JUNE 18 FOLLOWING A WEEK OF RUMORS THAT HE WAS IN PRISON, WOUNDED OR DEAD. AS USUAL, THE RUMOR MILL IS CARRYING STORIES THAT SARWARI'S ENEMY, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KESHTMAND, HAS SAID THAT HE WILL NOT RETURN FROM A TRIP TO PRAGUE UNTIL SARWARI IS OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT. (KESHTMAND HAS ALWAYS RETURNED FROM HIS

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TRIPS ABROAD, ALTHOUGH HE HAS OFTEN STAYED LONGER THAN APPARENTLY NECESSARY.)

4. OTHER GOSSIP INVOLVE A RUMOR THAT A GROUP OF PARCHAMISTS INCLUDING MINISTERS NOOR AND WAKIL AND REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBER GUL AQA, ARE TRYING (WITH SOVIET BACKING) TO INDUCE KARNAL TO "CRUSH" THE KHALQIS, BUT THAT HE IS RESISTING. THE LATEST PUTATIVE REPLACEMENT FOR KARNAL IS COMMERCE MINISTER JALALAR, A TECHNOCRAT WHO HAS THE BEST SURVIVAL RECORD IN THE CABINET. ALMOST NO ONE BELIEVES THE CONJECTURE THAT FORMER

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PRIME MINISTER YUSUF OR EX-KING ZAHIR HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY THE SOVIETS TO COME BACK AND TAKE OVER THE TOP SLOTS IN THE DRA.

5. THE DIPLOMATIC CIRCUIT IS BUZZING WITH SPECULATION AS TO THE SOVIET ROLE IN ALL THIS. OPINIONS RANGE FROM "THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT SINCE FEUDING IS AN AFGHAN NATIONAL CHARACTERISTIC" TO ASSERTIONS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE TAKING SIDES IN HOPES ONE SIDE WILL DESTROY THE OTHER AND MAKE THE DRA A MORE HOMOGENOUS AND VIABLE ENTITY. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR (PROTECT) REPORTED THAT WHEN HE RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE RUMORS WITH A TOP SOVIET DIPLOMAT, THE LATTER STUCK UP HIS NOSE AND SAID THAT, WHILE THE SOVIETS WERE TRYING TO GET THE AFGHAN LEFTISTS TO COOPERATE AND HELP "CONSOLIDATE THE REVOLUTION," SOME OF THE KHALCIS AND PARCHAMISTS "HATE EACH OTHER AND WON'T STOP SQUABBLING." THE SOVIET ADDED, NONETHELESS, THAT RUMORS OF INTERNECINE BATTLES WERE "GREATLY EXAGGERATED."

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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CINCEUR VAIHENGEN GE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 1932

6. WHILE SOVIET HEAVY TRANSPORT FLIGHTS IN AND OUT OF KABUL
APPEAR TO HAVE TAPERED OFF, SOVIET AND AFGHAN HELICOPTERS
HAVE TAKEN TO THE AIR IN RECORD NUMBERS IN THE PAST THREE DAYS
AND NIGHTS. DURING THE NIGHT OF JUNE 16-17 TRACER SHELLS
WERE SEEN OVER THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE CITY (ONE CONTACT
CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN SOME HITTING THE KOH-I-ASAFI HILL IN
THE CENTER OF THE CITY JUST UNDER THE TELEVISION BROADCAST
ANTENNA). SEVERAL HELICOPTERS TOOK THE AIR SHORTLY THEREAFTER,
AND A LARGE EXPLOSION WAS HEARD AT ABOUT 4 A.M. THE NEXT

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EVENING DOZENS OF HELICOPTERS WERE HEARD OVERHEAD FOR ABOUT
FOUR HOURS; THEIR FLIGHT PATTERNS INDICATED THAT THEY WERE

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PRACTICING NIGHT MANEUVERS, AN OMINOUS DEVELOPMENT FOR RESISTANCE FIGHTERS WHO USUALLY MOVE AT NIGHT. DURING THAT ACTIVITY, AT LEAST SIX MILITARY JET FLIGHTS PASSED HIGH OVER THE CITY FROM SOUTH TO NORTH.

7. A FEW MORE STUDENTS WERE "POISONED" IN KABUL SCHOOLS ON JUNE 16, INCLUDING THE SISTER OF ONE OF OUR FSNs WHO HAS SINCE RECOVERED. SOME OFFICERS AT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY WERE SIMILARLY AFFECTED ON JUNE 12. THE SON OF ANOTHER FSN WAS TAKEN AWAY BY ARMED POLICE AFTER THE FSN'S HOUSE WAS SEARCHED AT 2 A.M. ON JUNE 17. THE BOY ATTENDS A HIGH SCHOOL WHERE POLICE SUSPECT THAT A STOREROOM FIRE A COUPLE OF DAYS PREVIOUSLY WAS SET BY ANTI-REGIME STUDENTS. THE FSN SAID THAT THE POLICE WERE QUITE THOROUGH IN THEIR SEARCH WHEN THEY LEARNED THAT HE WORKS AT THE EMBASSY. OTHER CONTACTS HAVE INFORMED US THAT PRESS GANGS WERE AGAIN MAKING MIDNIGHT SEARCHES FOR DRAFT-AGE BOYS ON JUNE 16-17.

8. REPORTS FROM OTHER PROVINCES INDICATE THAT THE SOVIET AND AFGHAN MILITARY HAVE SUFFERED FRESH CASUALTIES IN A NUMBER OF PLACES. ONE PROBABLY EXAGGERATED REPORT REACHED US THAT THE BODIES OF 200 SOVIET AND 20 AFGHAN SOLDIERS WERE HELICOPTERED INTO THE CENTRAL CORPS BASE AT TAPEH TAJBEK (NEAR THE DARULAMAN PALACE) FROM MAHIPAR AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE KABUL GORGE ON JUNE 13. JETS AND HELICOPTERS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BOMBED AND STRAFED A VILLAGE CALLED KHORD KABUL NEAR MAHIPAR ON JUNE 15, PERHAPS IN RETALIATION.

9. A FAIRLY RELIABLE SOURCE TOLD US ON JUNE 17 THAT A PARCHAM FRIEND OF HIS CAME TO KABUL FROM QANDAHAR THAT DAY BY ARMY HELICOPTER BECAUSE BAKHTAR, THE INTERNAL AIRLINES, WAS NOT
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FLYING TO THAT TROUBLED CITY. HE CLAIMED THAT THE HELICOPTER WAS TURNED BACK ON JUNE 15 AND 16 BECAUSE IT COULDN'T GET PAST SHAR-I-SAFA, A TOWN OUTSIDE OF QANDAHAR THEN IN RESISTANCE HANDS. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE WAS HAPPY TO GET AWAY FROM QANDAHAR BECAUSE INSURGENTS HAD THREATENED TO ATTACK THE AIRPORT ON JUNE 18 UNLESS IT WERE EVACUATED. HE SAID THAT THE INSURGENTS HAD MADE THEIR THREAT BELIEVABLE BY BURNING SEVERAL HOUSES NEAR THE AIRPORT ON PREVIOUS DAYS.

10. ANOTHER CONTACT CLAIMED THAT A RELATIVE JUST RETURNED FROM HERAT REPORTED THAT A SOVIET CONVOY WAS ATTACKED SOUTH OF

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HERAT LAST WEEK, AND THAT IN RESPONSE THE SOVIETS HAD AGAIN MOVED INTO THE CITY IN FORCE. HE SAID THAT SHOPS WERE MOSTLY CLOSED, AND THAT SHOUTS OF "ALLAH-O-AKBAR" WERE HEARD NIGHTLY FROM THE ROOFTOPS. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTRY, TWO MORE TRUCKS CARRYING EXCESS EMBASSY STOCKS LEFT FOR PESHAWAR ON JUNE 17. WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM THEM AS YET.
GRIFFIN

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